

ZipZapPlay

Company Background

ZipZapPlay is a venture-backed gaming start-up founded in 2007 by Curt Bererton (CEO) and Mathilde Pignol (Chief Creative Officer). Bererton has a Ph.D. in Robotics, and says his passion is to create something from nothing. Paris-born Pignol gained a Masters in Human-Computer Interaction from Carnegie Mellon and says she wants to create products that are a delight to use. ZZP believes in making innovative, socially relevant games that speak as much to players' emotional commitment as to their creativity. ZZP's first product, PlayCrafter, was a tool that let anyone create his/her own games by dragging and dropping game pieces. The games are now played by half a million players monthly all over the Web. ZZP's follow-up, Happy Habitat, encourages users to create sympathetic living environments for virtual pets. "With Happy Habitat, we've moved into Facebook social gaming, and found significantly more success, because of the much larger audience that Facebook can bring to the table," says Bererton.

Objective

In mounting its Happy Habitat ad campaign, which ran for over 6 months on Facebook, ZZP's aim was to encourage user acquisition – to get people to take up the game, and for them, in turn, to invite their friends to join in. The rise of flash-games on Facebook was a key indicator for the company; when Bererton and Pignol saw flash-games heading the list of Facebook's top 10 games, it became clear that there was a big opportunity for them. They're also impressed by the amount of information available

Facebook Executive Summary

Client:



Objective: Encourage user acquisition

Solution: Facebook's keyword target filtering

Key Results: Over 100 million impressions

"Without going into specific numbers, the ads have been critical in driving our traffic and our revenue so far. They're one of the key pieces of our strategy."



Curt Bererton, CEO ZipZapPlay


about the success of Facebook social games. “You can look online at how many players the games have on a given day, and there are websites dedicated to tracking how well the games are doing,” says Pignol. “The monitoring is amazing. That’s why a targeted ad campaign seemed to make a lot of sense for us in spreading the word.”

Approach

In marketing Happy Habitat, ZYP took advantage of Facebook’s target filtering. Keyword targeting was the most important for them, because Happy Habitat is aimed at people who’ve indicated that they like animals, keep pets, and are interested in green issues. Gender targeting also played a part – more women are playing HH, because they’re responding to the nurturing aspects of the game. “Advertising is becoming more important as applications become less viral,” adds Bererton. “We think that direction will continue, and as an application developer, you have to become a lot smarter – you need to offer things that people actually want to talk about and share with each other. That’s the reason advertising is becoming more central to our thinking.”

Results


- Total impressions: 136.4 million
- Click-through rate: 0.091%
- ROI: ZYP has been able to target English-speaking countries throughout the world, including the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and the Netherlands, and kick-start an audience in each, by having the ads spread the word. The company has a stable of around 100 ads, and is constantly adjusting image and text to maximize effectiveness. ZYP has found that there’s anything from a Factor-10 to Factor-100 difference in user response to an ad that performs poorly and one that performs well. Hitting the ‘sweet spot’ of audience receptivity sees click-through rates shoot up massively.



Aren't They Cute? ×

Build a dog house and keep many dogs as pets in Happy Habitat! Grow plants to attract animals to your garden. Click to play now!


Like



Bunnycopia ×

Raise a family of rabbits! Build them a house and keep them as pets. Grow plants to attract animals to your garden. Click to play now!


Like



Horse Whisperer? ×

Raise horses and many more animals in Happy Habitat! Grow plants to attract animals to your garden. Click to play now!

Like



Play Happy Habitat ×

Rabbits, squirrels, deers, oh my! Grow plants to attract animals to your garden. Click to play now!

Like

The Future

ZYP says that, in future Facebook campaigns, they’ll be looking for even more control and granular targeting from their ads. “Facebook is one of the best-positioned online platforms, using information to ensure that users see advertising that’s interesting or relevant to them,” says Bererton. “And the more that social validation products, such as ‘like’ buttons, are used, the more powerful that tool becomes. And that is something that Facebook definitely has the power to do.”